

REMARKS

The Office required restriction between Group I and Group II, which it defined as follows:

Group I-claims 1-28, drawn to a seismic cable, and

Group II-claims 29-35, drawn to a method for assembling a seismic cable.

Applicants elect Group I, with traverse. Applicant identifies the Group I claims as claims 1-28. Because Applicant has made an election consonant with the restriction imposed by the Examiner and identified the claims elected, this response is complete.

Applicant traverses the restriction requirement because the standard for unity of invention has been improperly applied. Applicants agree that unity of invention analysis under PCT Rule 13.1 applies. Unity of invention requires “a technical relationship among those inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features.” PCT Rule 13.2. The Office alleges that there are none, and that restriction is therefore proper.

Applicants disagree, however. “The expression ‘special technical features’ shall mean those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art.” PCT Rule 13.2. Applicants respectfully submit that both the apparatus claims 1-28 and the method claims 29-35 recite that a “support cable” be attached to a “signal cable” and that it be attached “at a plurality of points spaced along the length thereof”. This limitation “define[s] a contribution... over the prior art.” At a minimum, the Office has failed to prove to the contrary, and so has failed to establish any lack of unity of invention.

Applicants therefore request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (713) 934-4053 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

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